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## **Editorial: Senators, do your job**

As he promised to do, President Barack Obama made his selection Wednesday for the vacant Supreme Court seat left open by the death of Associate Justice Antonin Scalia. His pick was Merrick Garland, who is the chief federal judge for the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

True to its word, the GOP establishment has promised to hold firm on its stance that no justices should be chosen for Scalia's seat until the American people make their voices heard in the November general election. (Never mind the fact this appears nowhere in the Constitution, and Obama has nearly a year left in his term. Senators also seem to disregard the fact the American people, by millions of votes, made their choice for Obama as president in both 2008 and 2012.)

What the GOP Senate majority seems to be banking on is a Republican presidential victory, which would then allow it to steal this obligation from Obama and stack the court in a more conservative direction. But let's follow the logic to its conclusion: Say the Republicans don't win the presidency and either Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders were to become chief executive. Do you think they'd be inclined to pick a moderate in that case?

Of course not. They may as well pick the most liberal jurist they can find, as the Republicans would have given them the indication they had nothing to lose by compromising. Say what you want about Garland, Obama could have picked someone who leans much more to the left than he. The fact the Senate is refusing to even give the man an up or down vote is a shocking dereliction of duty.

But don't take our word for it.

"Garland, nominated 18 months ago to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, was finally confirmed," reported The New York Times' Anthony Lewis March 28, 1997. "Every senator who spoke praised him, but 23 Republicans voted against his confirmation. ... Sen. Orrin Hatch, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, stood fast against his conservative colleagues. At the end of the debate he said: 'Playing politics with judges is unfair, and I am sick of it.'"

We couldn't agree more, Sen. Hatch.